

## Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

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OMB-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 PER-01 ABF-01 /063 W

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R 100840Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5646

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

SECDEF WASHDC

CINCEUR

CINCUSAREUR

USDOCOSOUTH

AMCONSUL FLORENCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 2187

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, IT, SA

SUBJ: REALIGNMENT OF U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MEDITERRANEAN  
DIVISION

REF: STATE 25981, DTG 031551Z FEB 76

1. EMBASSY HAS THOROUGHLY REVIEWED ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEER PROPOSALS FOR DEACTIVATION OF MEDITERRANEAN DIVISION (MDD) AT CAMP DARBY. SUBJECT WAS DISCUSSED AT LATE JANUARY MEETING IN ROME OF EUROPEAN CIVILIAN PERSONNEL COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND REVIEWED IN DETAIL BY AMBASSADOR ON FEBRUARY 6 WITH CHIEF, EUROPEAN DIVISION, ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (BRIGADIER GENERAL PRENTISS) AND MDD LIVORNO CHIEF (COLONEL WILLIAMS).

2. ON BASIS OF PLANNING SO FAR DEVELOPED, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THERE ARE AVAILABLE OPTIONS FOR PERSONNEL TRANSFERS AND REASSIGNMENTS SUFFICIENT TO MINIMIZE OR ELIMINATE ADVERSE REPERCUSSIONS PERTAINING TO ITALIAN LOCALLY-HIRED PERSONNEL. BEST CURRENT ESTIMATE OF SIZE OF PROBLEM TOWARDS THE END OF CALENDAR YEAR 1976 IS APPROXIMATELY THIRTEEN (OF 51) AFFECTED ITALIAN EMPLOYEES WHO MIGHT BE SUBJECT TO RIF AT THAT TIME.

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THAT, HOWEVER, IS A NEAR WORST-CASE ESTIMATE SINCE IT DOES NOT

YET TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF AFFECTED EMPLOYEES ELIGIBLE FOR INVOLUNTARY RETIREMENT OR FOR GUARANTEED EMPLOYMENT BY GOI UNDER ITALIAN LAW 98. MOREOVER, THAT ESTIMATE ASSUMES NO, RPT NO, VOLUNTARY ATTRITION AMONG THE AFFECTED EMPLOYEES.

3. THERE IS AMPLE TIME (THROUGH OR BEYOND THIS CALENDAR YEAR) TO CARRY OUT THE NEEDED PERSONNEL SHIFTS. WE ARE PERSUADED THAT THE EUROPEAN DIVISION OF THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS AND THE MDD ARE FULLY SENSITIVE TO THE POSSIBLE ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES OF RIF'S IN ITALY AND INTEND TO ENFORCE A VIGOROUS AND IMAGINATIVE PERSONNEL PLAN DESIGNED TO BRING THE RIF POTENTIAL TO, OR NEAR TO, THE ZERO LEVEL. THE EMBASSY IS, THEREFORE, IN AGREEMENT WITH THE MDD DEACTIVIZATION PLAN AS CURRENTLY PLANNED. THE AMBASSADOR, HOWEVER, WILL CONTINUE TO EXPECT TO REVIEW AND APPROVE SUCH PROPOSED RIF'S AS MAY FINALLY SEEM NECESSARY, AS AGREED WITH CINCUSNAVEUR.

4. THE EMBASSY HAS ALSO LOOKED INTO THE LOCAL IMPACT OF THE REDUCTION OF AMERICAN PERSONNEL IN THE LIVORNO AREA RESULTING FROM DEACTIVIZATION OF THE MDD. WHILE THE REDUCTION IS SUBSTANTIAL, WE CONCLUDE THAT NO UNACCEPTABLE REACTIONS WOULD RESULT. THE TIGHT HOUSING MARKET, THE POSSIBLE AUGMENTATION OF DARBY PERSONNEL BY THE ARRIVAL OF OTHER UNITS, THE CUSTOMARY SEASONAL OUTFLUX (ROUGHLY ONE THIRD) OF AMERICAN PERSONNEL FROM CAMP DARBY, AND THE SUMMER TIDE OF ITALIAN TOURISTS TO THIS RESORT AREA WILL TEND TO REDUCE THE IMPACT AND THE VISIBILITY OF THE REDUCTION.

5. IN ANY EVENT WE HAVE URGED THAT, IF AND WHEN THE FIRM DECISION TO DEACTIVATE IS MADE AND ANNOUNCED, THE CAMP DARBY AUTHORITIES INFORM THE MAYOR AND THE PRETORE IN A LOW-KEY FASHION OF THE IMPENDING CHANGES, AND OF PLANS TO HANDLE THE ASSOCIATED PROBLEMS. VOLPE

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